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Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)

Letter dated 2 November 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with instructions received from the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 6 August 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations, addressed to the Embassy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, transmitting a note dated 1 August 2012 (A/66/881, annex), which condemns the vandalization of an Argentine war monument on the Falkland Islands.

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Falkland Islands Government have condemned the act of vandalism on the memorial for Argentines who died during the 1982 Falkland Islands conflict. All memorials should be treated with the deepest respect.

The Falkland Islands police force is thoroughly investigating this incident. The Argentine Families Commission was contacted immediately after the vandalism was discovered. The damage to the memorial has been repaired and a ceremony is to be arranged in conjunction with the Argentine Families Commission once the memorial has been fully restored. I enclose a press release from the Falkland Islands police force on this incident dated 9 August 2012 (see annex).

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is disappointed that the Government of the Republic of Argentina has chosen to use this act of vandalism, which has rightly been condemned by all parties, as a vehicle to pursue its own political agenda.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 45.

(*Signed*) Mark Lyall **Grant**

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Annex to the letter dated 2 November 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Royal Falkland Islands Police press release

9 August 2012

On Saturday 28 July 2012 the Royal Falkland Islands Police received a report of damage to the cabinet housing the statue of the Virgin of Lujan at the Argentine Cemetery near Darwin. A full investigation was commenced.

Royal Falkland Islands Police crime scene investigators photographed and examined the scene. They found that the toughened glass panel forming the door and front of the cabinet had been damaged by blows from a blunt instrument. The toughened glass withstood a quantity of blows to its upper and central area, however it was eventually compromised towards its lower right corner in an area above a vase of flowers within the cabinet. A hole had been made in the glass in this area by means of concentrated blows with the blunt instrument.

The statue and all other contents of the cabinet were unmoved, undamaged and had not been subject to any force. Investigations show that nothing had been removed from within the cabinet.

The investigators found that a Bible, wrapped in a clear ziplock plastic bag and sealed with white electrical tape, had been placed in the cabinet through the hole in the toughened glass and laid on top of the flowers that occupied the vase in the lower right hand corner of the cabinet. The Bible had been sealed in the bag with its front cover folded open revealing a hand written inscription in Spanish. Translated the inscription reads: "For those combatants who, with great bravery, shared their hearts with my family. And just as it was for me, I hope it is a blessing and keeps you company". The inscription was signed Viviana and dated.

Investigations show that this Bible had previously been left outside and in front of the cabinet, protected from the weather by the plastic bag and electrical tape seal. These items are to be the subject of forensic examination in a United Kingdom forensic laboratory.

Two photographs from the crime scene have been released by the Royal Falkland Islands Police.

The first photograph shows the location of the damage to the toughened glass of the cabinet and the hole in it. It also shows the location of the plastic wrapped Bible on top of the flowers at the bottom of the hole.

The second photograph shows the inscription on the first page of the Bible and the plastic wrap.

A photocopy of the inscription has been provided to the Argentine Families Commission with a request for assistance in identifying who may have carried the Bible to the cemetery and placed it in front of the cabinet, and any information that may assist in identifying those responsible for the damage.

The Royal Falkland Islands Police hope that the above information and photographs will assist the memory of anyone who can assist them in this investigation. If you have any information or can assist in the ongoing investigation, please contact the Royal Falkland Islands Police on tel: 28100, fax: 28110, e-mail: cid@police.gov.fk or safe@police.gov.fk; or letter addressed to Police Headquarters, Ross Road, Stanley, Falkland Islands, FIQQ 1ZZ.